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NEWS RELEASE

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School Classifications: 81 percent of Schools Met All Annual Targets 12 Schools Honored as 2011 Regents' Commended Schools

Four of every five Rhode Island public schools (235 out of 289 schools, or 81 percent) met all of the 2010-11 targets in the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), according to the annual school-performance classifications that Gov. Lincoln D. Chafee and Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist released today (May 6, 2011).

This year's results mark a 2-point increase over last year, when 79 percent of Rhode Island schools met all of their annual targets.

Among those schools that met all of their annual targets, 12 schools were honored as 2011 [Regents' Commended Schools](#). These schools have achieved exceptionally high performance in English and mathematics for two years or made significant progress for two years.

The classifications, based on results of the 2010-11 state assessments in mathematics, reading, and writing as well as the 2009-10 attendance and graduation rates, showed that 90 percent of the elementary schools (158 out of 176 schools), 81 percent of the middle schools (46 out of 57 schools), and 55 percent of the high schools (31 out of 56 schools) met all of their targets. (The results do not include the early-grade elementary schools, which use a different state assessment; the R. I. Department of Elementary Education will release their classifications during the summer.)

"While I am pleased to see that more than 80 percent of our schools have met all of their annual targets, I am concerned that some schools continue to struggle with low achievement," said Governor Chafee. "We need to continue to invest in public education, which is the key to ensuring the economic well-being and the future prosperity of Rhode Island."

"I commend our students and teachers for their success in meeting most of our annual targets for growth and achievement, especially the students and teachers in our 12 Regents' Commended Schools," said George D. Caruolo, Esq., Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. "We will continue moving forward with our strategic plan to ensure that all schools achieve their goals and that all students are well-prepared for success."

"Though once again the large majority of our schools are making progress, we must do more to improve student achievement, particularly in our high schools and in mathematics," said Commissioner Gist. "Today's reports show that our schools are performing well on average, but that in many schools significant achievement gaps separate the performance of students of color, students with disabilities, English-language learners, and students living in poverty from the performance of their peers. As we work to transform education in Rhode Island, one of our highest priorities must be closing these achievement gaps."

Among the 54 schools (19 percent) that missed one or more of their annual targets, 19 schools (7 percent) missed targets for the first time. In addition, 51 schools are identified for improvement, either because they missed their targets for the second year in a row or because they met all their targets this year but missed targets in two or more previous years. (Schools must meet all targets for two years in a row before they are no longer identified for improvement.) Schools identified for improvement face varying levels of sanctions, ranging up to corrective action and restructuring.

The R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) also released the 2011 classifications of school districts, which showed that 12 districts are in “intervention status.” RIDE will provide technical assistance and oversight to these districts as they implement plans to turn around their lowest-performing schools. One district in intervention status, North Kingstown, met all of its annual targets this year. If North Kingstown meets all of its targets next year, it will be clear of federal and state sanctions and interventions.

Ten schools that were previously identified for improvement have met all of their targets for two consecutive years and are therefore removed from intervention status. They are:

- Ashton School, Cumberland
- B.F. Norton Elementary School, Cumberland
- Alice M. Waddington School, East Providence
- Fallon Memorial School, Pawtucket
- M. Virginia Cunningham School, Pawtucket,
- Hope Arts School, Providence
- Toll Gate High School, Warwick
- Wakefield Hills Elementary School, West Warwick
- Bernon Heights School, Woonsocket
- Citizens Memorial School, Woonsocket

Under provisions of NCLB, the state sets annual targets for each school level (elementary, middle, high school) in English (reading and writing) and mathematics, attendance (elementary and middle schools), and graduation rates (high schools). The target scores for the state assessments, which are based on how many students achieve proficiency or improve at other scoring levels, rise in equal increments until they reach 100 (100-percent proficiency) in 2014.

Schools must meet the targets for their level on a schoolwide basis as well as for each of eight student groups: Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, White, students in poverty, students with disabilities, and English-language learners. Schools must meet the targets for student groups only if they have 45 students in that group across all tested grades.

RIDE has posted supplementary materials on InfoWorks Live! (<http://infoworks.ride.ri.gov>), the Rhode Island education-data initiative (see under “Student Achievement”), and at: <http://www.eride.ri.gov/reportcard/11/Default.asp>

These supplementary materials include:

- The complete lists of school and district classifications and of Regents’ Commended Schools
- Individual report cards for each school and district and a brochure explaining the school-performance classifications; and
- The RIDE Accountability System Technical Bulletin Workbook, which provides technical information about the classification system.